

By Mr. MCCAIN, from the Committee on Armed Services, without amendment:

S. 1519. An original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-125).

By Mr. ISAKSON, from the Committee on Veterans' Affairs, with an amendment in the nature of a substitute:

S. 1024. A bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to reform the rights and processes relating to appeals of decisions regarding claims for benefits under the laws administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes (Rept. No. 115-126).

#### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

The following bills and joint resolutions were introduced, read the first and second times by unanimous consent, and referred as indicated:

By Mr. GARDNER (for himself and Mr. HEINRICH):

S. 1518. A bill to direct the Secretary of Labor to enter into contracts with industry intermediaries for purposes of promoting the development of and access to apprenticeships in the technology sector, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. MCCAIN:

S. 1519. An original bill to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2018 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes; from the Committee on Armed Services; placed on the calendar.

By Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. NELSON, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. MANCHIN, and Mr. KENNEDY):

S. 1520. A bill to expand recreational fishing opportunities through enhanced marine fishery conservation and management, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation.

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1521. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reduce the interest rate caps for Federal Direct student loans, to eliminate loan origination fees on all Federal Direct student loans, and to provide for refinancing of Federal Direct student loans and Federal family education loans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

By Mr. HEINRICH (for himself and Mr. ALEXANDER):

S. 1522. A bill to establish an Every Kid Outdoors program, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

By Mrs. FISCHER (for herself and Mr. LANKFORD):

S. 1523. A bill to provide for additional safeguards with respect to imposing Federal mandates, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

#### SUBMISSION OF CONCURRENT AND SENATE RESOLUTIONS

The following concurrent resolutions and Senate resolutions were read, and referred (or acted upon), as indicated:

By Mr. CRUZ:

S. Res. 216. A resolution calling on the Government of Iran to release unjustly de-

tained United States citizens and legal permanent resident aliens, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Foreign Relations.

#### ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 45

At the request of Mr. CRUZ, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 45, a bill to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to increase penalties for individuals who illegally reenter the United States after being removed and for other purposes.

S. 251

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S. 251, a bill to repeal the Independent Payment Advisory Board in order to ensure that it cannot be used to undermine the Medicare entitlement for beneficiaries.

S. 266

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the names of the Senator from Kansas (Mr. ROBERTS), the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the Senator from Georgia (Mr. ISAKSON), the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) and the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) were added as cosponsors of S. 266, a bill to award the Congressional Gold Medal to Anwar Sadat in recognition of his heroic achievements and courageous contributions to peace in the Middle East.

S. 322

At the request of Mr. PETERS, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 322, a bill to protect victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and dating violence from emotional and psychological trauma caused by acts of violence or threats of violence against their pets.

S. 334

At the request of Mr. INHOFE, the name of the Senator from Texas (Mr. CORNYN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 334, a bill to clarify that a State has the sole authority to regulate hydraulic fracturing on Federal land within the boundaries of the State.

S. 378

At the request of Mr. BARRASSO, the name of the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 378, a bill to amend titles 5 and 28, United States Code, to require the maintenance of databases on awards of fees and other expenses to prevailing parties in certain administrative proceedings and court cases to which the United States is a party, and for other purposes.

S. 540

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the names of the Senator from Hawaii (Mr. SCHATZ) and the Senator from Montana (Mr. DAINES) were added as cosponsors of S. 540, a bill to limit the authority of States to tax certain income of employees for employment duties performed in other States.

S. 545

At the request of Mr. PAUL, the name of the Senator from Alabama (Mr. STRANGE) was added as a cosponsor of S. 545, a bill to preserve and protect the free choice of individual employees to form, join, or assist labor organizations, or to refrain from such activities.

S. 622

At the request of Mr. FLAKE, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. COTTON) was added as a cosponsor of S. 622, a bill to preserve open competition and Federal Government neutrality towards the labor relations of Federal Government contractors on Federal and federally funded construction projects.

S. 654

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the names of the Senator from Maine (Ms. COLLINS) and the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) were added as cosponsors of S. 654, a bill to revise section 48 of title 18, United States Code, and for other purposes.

S. 683

At the request of Ms. HIRONO, the name of the Senator from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY) was added as a cosponsor of S. 683, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to extend the requirement to provide nursing home care to certain veterans with service-connected disabilities.

S. 705

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arizona (Mr. MCCAIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 705, a bill to amend the National Child Protection Act of 1993 to establish a national criminal history background check system and criminal history review program for certain individuals who, related to their employment, have access to children, the elderly, or individuals with disabilities, and for other purposes.

S. 772

At the request of Mr. MCCAIN, the name of the Senator from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 772, a bill to amend the PROTECT Act to make Indian tribes eligible for AMBER Alert grants.

S. 819

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 819, a bill to amend the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 to provide more effective remedies to victims of discrimination in the payment of wages on the basis of sex, and for other purposes.

S. 872

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 872, a bill to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make permanent the extension of the Medicare-dependent hospital (MDH) program and the increased payments under the Medicare low-volume hospital program.

S. 1112

At the request of Ms. HEITKAMP, the name of the Senator from New York (Mrs. GILLIBRAND) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1112, a bill to support States in their work to save and sustain the health of mothers during pregnancy, childbirth, and in the postpartum period, to eliminate disparities in maternal health outcomes for pregnancy-related and pregnancy-associated deaths, to identify solutions to improve health care quality and health outcomes for mothers, and for other purposes.

S. 1124

At the request of Mr. HATCH, the name of the Senator from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1124, a bill to grant the Director of the United States Marshals Service authority to appoint criminal investigators in the excepted service.

S. 1146

At the request of Mrs. SHAHEEN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Ms. DUCKWORTH) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1146, a bill to enhance the ability of the Office of the National Ombudsman to assist small businesses in meeting regulatory requirements and develop outreach initiatives to promote awareness of the services the Office of the National Ombudsman provides, and for other purposes.

S. 1186

At the request of Ms. BALDWIN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. WARNER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1186, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Transportation to designate certain entities as centers of excellence for domestic maritime workforce training and education, and for other purposes.

S. 1256

At the request of Mr. MARKEY, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1256, a bill to award a Congressional Gold Medal to the 23d Headquarters, Special Troops and the 3133d Signal Service Company in recognition of their unique and distinguished service as a "Ghost Army" that conducted deception operations in Europe during World War II.

S. 1311

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the names of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) and the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) were added as cosponsors of S. 1311, a bill to provide assistance in abolishing human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1312

At the request of Mr. GRASSLEY, the names of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) and the Senator from Louisiana (Mr. KENNEDY) were added as cosponsors of S. 1312, a bill to prioritize the fight against human trafficking in the United States.

S. 1325

At the request of Mr. TESTER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) was added as a cosponsor of S.

1325, a bill to amend title 38, United States Code, to improve the authorities of the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to hire, recruit, and train employees of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and for other purposes.

S. 1343

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Ohio (Mr. PORTMAN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1343, a bill to amend the Internal Revenue Code to extend and modify certain charitable tax provisions.

S. 1426

At the request of Mr. THUNE, the name of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1426, a bill to amend the Ted Stevens Olympic and Amateur Sports Act to expand the purposes of the corporation, to designate the United States Center for Safe Sport, and for other purposes.

S. 1427

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, the name of the Senator from Nebraska (Mrs. FISCHER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1427, a bill to provide States with the option of applying for and receiving temporary waivers for the States to experiment with new approaches that integrate Federal programs in order to provide more coordinated and holistic solutions to families in need, and for other purposes.

S. 1463

At the request of Mr. CRAPO, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Mr. HELLER) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1463, a bill to amend the Financial Stability Act of 2010 to modify the term of the independent member of the Financial Stability Oversight Council.

S. 1465

At the request of Mr. CASSIDY, the name of the Senator from West Virginia (Mrs. CAPITO) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1465, a bill to terminate the prohibitions on the exportation and importation of natural gas, and for other purposes.

S. 1489

At the request of Mr. BLUMENTHAL, the names of the Senator from Minnesota (Ms. KLOBUCHAR) and the Senator from Michigan (Ms. STABENOW) were added as cosponsors of S. 1489, a bill to amend section 3312 of title 38, United States Code, to restore Post-9/11 Educational Assistance and other relief for veterans affected by school closures, and for other purposes.

S. 1503

At the request of Ms. WARREN, the name of the Senator from Illinois (Mr. DURBIN) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1503, a bill to require the Secretary of the Treasury to mint coins in recognition of the 60th anniversary of the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame.

S.J. RES. 16

At the request of Mr. WYDEN, the name of the Senator from North Dakota (Ms. HEITKAMP) was added as a cosponsor of S.J. Res. 16, a joint resolu-

tion approving the discontinuation of the process for consideration and automatic implementation of the annual proposal of the Independent Medicare Advisory Board under section 1899A of the Social Security Act.

S. RES. 102

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Virginia (Mr. Kaine) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 102, a resolution reaffirming the strategic partnership between the United States and Mexico, and recognizing bilateral cooperation that advances the national security and national interests of both countries.

S. RES. 201

At the request of Mrs. MURRAY, the name of the Senator from Missouri (Mrs. MCCASKILL) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 201, a resolution affirming the importance of title IX, applauding the increase in educational opportunities available to women and girls, and recognizing the tremendous amount of work left to be done to further increase those opportunities.

S. RES. 211

At the request of Mr. TOOMEY, the name of the Senator from Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 211, a resolution condemning the violence and persecution in Chechnya.

S. RES. 213

At the request of Mr. CORNYN, the name of the Senator from Tennessee (Mr. CORKER) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 213, a resolution honoring the memory of Dallas Police Department Senior Corporal Lorne Ahrens, Sergeant Michael Smith, Officer Michael Krol, Officer Patrick Zamarripa, and Dallas Area Rapid Transit Police Officer Brent Thompson, who were killed during the attack in Dallas, Texas, that occurred 1 year ago, on July 7, 2016.

#### STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. NELSON:

S. 1521. A bill to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to reduce the interest rate caps for Federal Direct student loans, to eliminate loan origination fees on all Federal Direct student loans, and to provide for refinancing of Federal Direct student loans and Federal family education loans; to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

Mr. NELSON. Mr. President, I want to talk about a heavy financial burden that too many of our fellow Americans are being forced to deal with. What I am talking about is student loans. You may be surprised to know that the second largest amount of debt in America, next to home mortgage debt, is student loan debt. Student loan debt is \$1.3 trillion more than all the credit card debt combined in America. Graduates from the class of 2016 have more than \$37,000 in student loan debt, on average, when they graduate.

To make matters worse, the Federal Government last week announced that